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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 CONAKRY 000423

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [GV](#)

SUBJECT: DADIS ASSURES CONTACT GROUP OF ELECTIONS IN 2009

REF: A. CONAKRY 408

[1](#)B. CONAKRY 409

[1](#)C. CONAKRY 379

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Kent C. Brokenshire for Reason 1.4 B/D

[1](#)1. Summary: In what appears to be a successful International Contact Group visit to Conakry July 16-17, CNDD president Moussa Dadis Camara agreed to all major points presented by the group. These include a commitment for elections in 2009, a commitment of non-candidacy for himself and the CNDD in upcoming elections, and the establishment of two key election commissions. The Contact Group remained in Conakry 10 hours longer than scheduled in order to join Dadis as he opened a televised dialogue with the Forces Vives. He also vowed not to let alleged troubles along Guinea's borders interfere with the election timeline. Dadis' agreement on major points came after the Contact Group ramped up its pressure on the CNDD and pressed both Dadis and the Forces Vives to cooperate over the creation of two election commissions. While Dadis' strong public commitment to elections is a positive development, his genuineness is questionable. On a surer note, numerous pitfalls lie ahead. End Summary.

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THE ICG-G'S HARD LINE  
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[1](#)2. (U) The International Contact Group for Guinea (ICG-G) arrived in Conakry determined to press Dadis for timely elections and active dialogue with the country's political players, known collectively as the Forces Vives. The ICG-G, which included ECOWAS Commission President Mohamed Chambas, AU Peace and Security Commissioner Ambassador Ramtane Lamamra, and AU special envoy Ibrahima Fall and the UN's Said Djinnit, feared that any slip in the election schedule between now and October would likely push elections into [1](#)2010. In discussion with the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) as well as with representatives of the Forces Vives, three possible weak points in the election program appeared. These included a lack of funds for registration cards, the stalled formation of the National Transition Council (CNT), and the makeup of an ad-hoc committee created to troubleshoot potential election problems. "If we do not work things out quickly," Fall told the Forces Vives, "We will lose more time and suddenly find ourselves unable to complete elections this year." The most salient threat, however, remained Dadis' possible intention to throw obstacles in the path of elections, forcing a delay until 2010.

[1](#)3. (C) Chambas told Charge early on the first day that he was tired of dealing delicately with Dadis and that the CNDD, and the time had come to press a harder line and a firm commitment for elections in 2009. Charge responded that the USG supported a determined drive to hold elections in 2009 and would back the ICG-G in this effort. Spain's Ambassador, representing in Conakry the EU presidency held by Sweden,

gave Chambas the same assurance and urged him to press the issue of elections in 2009 directly with Dadis. Indeed, the mood of the entire ICG-G was in line with this sentiment.

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THE ICG-G MEETS DADIS  
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14. (U) Following meetings with the Forces Vives, CENI and the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Planning, the ICG-G met with Dadis at the Camp Alpha Yaya military base in Conakry. The group, which comprised approximately 20 members representing the EU, UN, bilateral partners as well as organization such as La Francophonie and Mano River Union, was ushered into a room with a half dozen Homeric paintings of Dadis adorning the walls. A heavily armed soldier drinking a beer stood guard outside.

15. (U) Chambas and Ambassador Lamamra's remarks to Dadis urged greater political dialogue between the CNDD and the political groups as well as a more palpable financial commitment on the part of the CNDD for elections. Dadis appeared calm and sober, and listened attentively. Addressing the group in a soft voice, he agreed that the time for elections in Guinea had come; he promised to honor the 2009 election timetable and initiate better communication with the Forces Vives.

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DADIS SURPRISES ICG-G  
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16. (U) Following the general meeting, Chambas, Fall, Djinnit, and Lamamra spoke to Dadis behind closed doors in order to deliver a number of sensitive points, including guarantees that he would not run for office and would address issues of the CNT and ad hoc committee with the Forces Vives. To the surprise of the ICG-G, Dadis offered to meet the Forces Vives the following day to solicit their immediate input and participation in both the CNT and the Ad Hoc Committee. He concurred that the Ad Hoc committee should complete its work in two weeks, while the CNT would have a timeline of a month. He was firm that neither committee should be cause for further election delays. Dadis was also agreeable to allowing the ICG-G to bring in constitutional experts to serve with the CNT as it examines the electoral code. "It was a very relaxed atmosphere," said Chambas in briefing the rest of the ICG-G later that night. "We found the President open to our suggestions."

17. (U) The ICG-G, which was due to break up at 10 AM the following day, extended its stay in Guinea by nearly 11 hours in order to serve as 'active observer' in Dadis' meetings with the Forces Vives. On the issue of funding for voter registration cards, the ICG-G determined that by shuffling around a number of election projects, the international community would be in a position to provide the CENI with the funding to proceed almost immediately with the voter card initiative.

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DADIS VOWS ELECTIONS IN 2009  
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18. (U) In the televised meeting with the Forces Vives, Dadis repeated for national consumption the commitments he had made to the ICG-G. He vowed to move forward on the creation of a CNT as well as an Ad Hoc Committee. The CNT would be charged with reviewing election procedures described in the constitution, while the Ad Hoc Committee was mandated to troubleshoot possible difficulties and make recommendations to keep elections on schedule. One task for the Ad Hoc Committee will be to consider the issue of election registration for Guineans living overseas. Both the CNT and

Ad Hoc Committee would be comprised of elements from the Forces Vives, CNDD and CENI. During the meeting Dadis also insisted that a recent CNDD communiqu  alleging troubles along Guinea's borders (Ref A) would not affect elections. "If anyone uses that communiqu  to put off elections, I will pursue them and punished them," said Dadis. He also agreed that should political bickering delay the formation of the CNT, the Ad Hoc Committee would take over its role.

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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FINAL COMMUNIQUE  
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¶9. (U) Most of the final communiqu  was drafted during the night of July 16, with a number of key additions being hastily included at the airport the following evening as the ICG-G prepared to depart Guinea. The major points of the communiqu  follow:

- The ICG-G notes the President's commitment to hold national assembly and presidential elections in 2009 as well as the non-candidacy of the President, CNDD members and the Prime Minister in these elections.
- The AU is prepared to invoke sanctions described in the Lome Declaration and the Acte Constitutif if Guinean authorities do not move in a timely manner on elections.
- The ICG-G encourages the CNDD and the government to provide 30 billion Guinea Francs (\$6.35 million) in additional election funding.
- The ICG-G urges the Forces Vives to provide a timely response to the government's offer of collaborating on the CNT, and urges both groups to work together for this common goal. The life of the CNT is expected to last a month from the end of July until the end of August.
- The ICG-G continues to be concerned about impunity and violence committed by elements of the military, the stifling of free speech and the freedom of association of political parties, as well as access to state media by political parties and freedom of the press.

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SUMMARY  
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¶10. (C) The genuineness of Dadis enthusiasm for elections in 2009 remains an open question. It is possible, though unlikely, that he sincerely wishes to quit Guinea's confusing and unsettled political scene and elections offer the cleanest, most acceptable break. He may also wish to parade as a democrat in order to deflect criticism and accusations of undermining democracy should a sudden and unexpected event derail the process. Whatever the case, Dadis is on the record before the ICG-G and the population of Guinea vowing to uphold the 2009 timetable and pushing to overcome delays. With the next meeting of the ICG-G scheduled for October, it will be up to the local contact group to work with the government and Forces Vives to overcome election obstacles that will surely appear in the uncertain road ahead.

BROKENSHIRE